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general and accused him of being too
vague on the issues in his campaign for
governor.

"He does not offer a strong alterna-
tive. He would lose, I think," said Ste-
venson.

"I'm very concerned that Thompson
has been running on my [1982] economic

trial Committee, which will endorse a
candidate for governor in November,
and the son of a fifth member. Hartigan
has also hired 10 Democratic county
chairmen or their relatives, mostly in
regional offices. A recent study by the
National Association of Attorneys Gen-
eral reported that Hartigan had the 10th-

hired Democrats, Republicans and inde-
pendents on the basis of quality."

Although several of Hartigan's politi-
cal associates described Stevenson as a
"spoiler," Hartigan would not evaluate
the former senator's chances as a can-
didate for governor. "I don't believe in
commenting negatively about Demo-

"We talked four or five weeks ago,"
Stevenson said, "and I told him that I
would like to be helpful." Stevenson also
said that he tried to draw out Hartigan
on the issues, yet got few specifics. "We
left it that he would get in touch with

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Continued on page 3

Stubborn fire puts heat on dump owner

By Casey Bukro
Environment writer

A stubborn underground fire that
continues to smolder in an aban-
doned chemical waste dump on the
Southeast Side has focused atten-
tion again on the toxic legacy of
Steve Martell, long a target of
legal efforts by environmental
agencies in the Chicago area.

The fire was discovered more
than a week ago at U.S. Scrap Co.,
a 6-acre dump in the Lake
Calumet region. Officials said con-
cern remains over a possible ex-
plosion or release of toxic fumes.

U.S. Environmental Protection
Agency staff have been trying to
smother the fire and determine its
extent. Aerial infrared scanning
shows that several hot spots exist
underground, and officials have
devised evacuation plans in case of
an explosion.

James Dencek, Metropolitan
Sanitary District supervisor of
field operations, said the fire, be-
lieved to have been started by a
railroad crew burning brush along
tracks, is in an area pocked with
waste dumps where highly explo-
sive methane forms from decaying
garbage.

"Methane is one of your most
combustible gases," Dencek said.
It is similar to natural gas used in
home heating. "Fire could touch
off an explosion."

But the fire also, has renewed

legal efforts to force Martell to
clean up the toxic dumps for which
he has been held responsible.

"He's got nine lives," said Mi-
chael Hayes, an assistant Illinois
attorney general. Hayes said the
fire at U.S. Scrap "may have been
a blessing in disguise" because it
has turned official attention on
Martell and U.S. Scrap's dangers.

"We're going to try to see that
all his problems get attention in
court as fast as we can to get them
cleaned up," Hayes said.

U.S. Scrap is one of a string of
fly-by-night hazardous-waste sites
in Illinois and Indiana operated
and abandoned by Martell, accord-
ing to official accounts and records
spanning more than a decade.

Last Tuesday, a Cook County
Circuit Court judge ordered Mar-
tell, who has been identified as the
dump's owner, to erect fences and
warnings to keep children or
others from wandering onto the
site at 119th Street and Cottage
Grove Avenue.

U.S. Scrap was shut down in 1976
as an environmental hazard and in
1980 was found to be an illegal
toxic waste dump when two aban-
doned grain silos nearby were dis-
covered to contain 100,000 gallons
of hazardous wastes.

In a 1981 report, the Illinois Leg-
islative Investigating Commission
called Martell, 56, a former wel-

Continued on page 2

Firemen 'moonlight' as crimin

By Art Bamum

Firefighters are supposed
to fight fires, linebackers are
supposed to make tackles and
police officers are sup-
posed to catch crooks.

But on Sunday, a group of
Chicago firefighters did a lit-
tle bit of all three.

As Squad No. 1 was return-
ing to its station from a
house fire on South Morgan
Street, a screaming, visibly
upset woman came out of the
Morgan Street rapid transit
station and met the fire-
fighters on the overpass
above the Eisenhower Ex-
pressway.

"We were right there and
she came out crying and
asking for help," Lt. Thomas
Casey said. "She told us that
someone came up behind her
and grabbed her and that she
was assaulted by a man
wearing a red T-shirt. We
looked down at the platform
and the guy stood out like a
sore thumb."

Squad members, dripping
in sweat after taking off the
heavy fire jackets they had
worn while fighting the fire,
attempted to go down to the
platform, but were barred
entry because passengers
can only exit on the Morgan
Street ramp when no attend-

Continued on page 2



Former linebacker Jerry Bartlett chased down a
fleeing suspect Sunday as he and members of Squad
1 returned from a fire. Back at their quarters at 324 S.

Desplaine
Thomas C
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US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



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Chicago Tribune

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AUG 26 1985



Tribune photo by John Irvine

Garbed in protective clothing, a survey team prepares to help to determine the extent of the underground fire temperature probes at U.S. Scrap Co. The probes that is raging at the abandoned chemical waste dump.

Dumps

Continued from page 1

der, "a rare type of entrepreneur who makes a fortune by combining the improper handling of hazardous wastes with unkept promises to correct specific faults."

Martell reached nine agreements with the sanitary district between 1971 and 1980 to correct pollution problems at U.S. Scrap. "He ignored them all," according to the report, which said Martell owned U.S. Scrap.

Martell is president of Paxton Landfill Corp., 12201 S. Oglesby Ave., which is operating because a federal judge ruled in 1981 that Martell's record as a renegade toxic-waste dump operator could not be held against him. U.S. District Judge Charles Kocoras ordered the Illinois EPA to give Paxton an operating permit.

Kocoras said an operating license had to be issued because many charges against Martell in court were unresolved. A number of the charges are pending.

At least three federal and state suits are pending against Martell, one of them dating to 1977.

Martell operates Paxton Landfill out of a weather-beaten trailer that serves as his office and a snack bar for garbage-truck drivers. A steady stream of lumbering, hump-backed garbage trucks pass through the gates into a no-man's land of marshes and weeds, Chicago's densest concentration of garbage dumps and heavy industry.

Attempts to reach Martell were

unsuccessful. He would not answer phone calls to his office. A woman at the snack bar counter said last week that Martell was "down-town," could not be reached and would not be back. The trailer is decorated with signs that advertise pastry and warn against watchdogs.

Dencek recalls seeing Martell once jump out a rear window of the trailer to escape questions about Paxton.

"When I was a rookie pollution control officer, he sicked his dogs on me," Dencek said. "His scars are all over our landscape. He is the epitome of the renegade landfill operator of the old day. Because of his type of operations, we have underground fires and pollution of our underground water systems."

Kenneth Bechely, Chicago regional chief of the state EPA's division of hazardous-waste control, said Martell is the type of operator that inspired new Illinois hazardous-waste control laws.

"He has a lousy record," Bechely said. He also said, though, that the Paxton landfill, which Martell bought in 1979, is "reasonably good" and "better now than it was in past years."

Martell also has been named as owner of U.S. Drum Disposal Co., 2200 E. 119th St., closed in 1976 as an environmental hazard. The Illinois EPA cleaned the site in 1984 at a cost of \$850,000 when Martell failed to do so.

Cinda Schien, spokeswoman for the state EPA, said Martell was under a 1980 court order to remove thousands of barrels of hazardous waste from U.S. Drum. Instead,

she said, Martell bulldozed the drums into a lagoon and covered the lagoon with dirt.

"Mr. Martell's name is involved in one way or another with some of our worst [toxic waste clean-up] projects," Schien said.

U.S. Drum had a second operation at 135th Street and Hoxie Avenue.

Official documents show that besides Paxton, U.S. Scrap and U.S. Drum, Martell is linked to a 20-acre disposal site in Ottawa, Ill.; Stryker International Inc.; and Synthetic Energy Products of America, 9th and Cline Avenues in Gary. All have run afoul of the law.

Martell's lawyer, Ann Tighe, says such criticism is unwarranted.

"He has been engaged since 1979 in running Paxton landfill; he has been running a model landfill," Tighe said. "I don't think he is appropriately determined to be a problem."

Tighe would not comment on pending charges against Martell or his past performance. But she calls Martell a "down-to-earth kind of guy."

"He wears regular work clothes like a regular working man," she said. "He's the kind of guy who, when he is short-handed, climbs up on the bulldozer and runs the bulldozer. He doesn't smoke, and he doesn't drink."

Squad car hits girl who ran into street

A 6-year-old South Side girl suffered a broken leg Saturday when she apparently darted in front of a Chicago police squad car, police said. Tiffany Jenkins, of 2822 S. Calumet Ave., "stepped out or ran out in front of a police car and he hit her," said Grand Crossing District Capt. William Quinn.

Quinn would not release the name of the officer, who he said was responding to a "call for assistance" at about 11:30 a.m.

The law was heralded as reform by doctors who lobbied for the legislation, saying it would reduce the number of frivolous suits and protect plaintiffs from fee-hungry lawyers.

Lawyers argue that the new law unfairly punishes victims of medical malpractice. The lawyers are taking the matter to court.

Just as they rushed to beat the deadline to file under the old law, attorneys appear now to be holding back on filing new suits, hoping a suit challenging the constitutionality of the new law will be decided in their favor.

Leonard Ring, a Loop attorney who filed the challenge, said lawyers had filed virtually all the malpractice cases they had on hand to circumvent the new legislation.

Medical malpractice suits must be filed within four years of the time of the alleged malpractice or from the time the malpractice became known.

Ring also said he expects few cases to be filed until his challenge to the new law is resolved before Judge Joseph Wosik of Cook County Circuit Court. Hearings on the suit are to begin Sept. 24.

Crash

Continued from page 1

doesn't.

"But whatever the motivations and whatever the outcome, none of them will be able to drive near the scene without thinking about what happened. They'll have to sleep at night. They'll carry the decisions with them."

"If you or I got into a fender bender on the street, there would have to be some blame assessed."

Firemen

Continued from page 1

ant is on duty.

While the equipment truck stayed put so a firefighter could call the police, the snorkel truck and three of the firemen headed for the Halsted Street entrance to the platform.

"When we got there, we saw the guy leaving and then running on foot away and we chased him for several blocks," said firefighter Jerry Bartlett, who, with fellow firefighters Louis Sanchez and Jerry Coczek, was riding on the

One sale coming up

Helen M. Washington stays in the background considers one of the dolls Washington displayed at Street Art Fair. The youngster decided to buy the doll. More than 50 exhibitors sold their crafts at the fair.

Buses

Continued from page 1

wheels fell off.

Asked about reports of balding tires, Cardilli said transit experts have assured him that they did not pose a safety problem.

"We laymen assume that if a tire has no tread, it's not safe," he said, adding that maintenance experts have told him that such a tire "is not faulty and can meet standards" used throughout the transit industry.

Frank Cihak, a technical consultant from the American Public Transit Association who, attended the press conference at the CTA's request, said the CTA's choice of tires—Goodyears imprinted with a warning that maximum speed for

their use is perfectly acceptable, even travel on such as Lak Hwy. 190 into Airport.

He said that public transit including B

Cardilli said considering on buses the expressways safety problem now use.

Cardilli said inspection, on duty and on overtime and added come up with for it.

To you, to me, or to both of us. But now there is no blame and there is no investigation. That hurts.

"If the bus driver was wrong, then an official statement should be made, and by God if the kids made a wrong turn or caused the crash, then again another statement should be made as to the cause."

"But now there's nothing. No definitive word. Just talk of lawsuits. What I want is justice, and I don't care how many expensive in-house lawyers the CTA

throws at us wait for the stop asking hurt us any dead. We've

During the cal leaders, Jackson, sur old Washing leaders, lob charges ag against Dale the crash, sympathy Frederickson Chicago neigh

snorkel truck that chased the suspect down Van Buren Street.

Bartlett, 6-foot-6, 270 pounds, is a former linebacker for Lincoln Park High School, Illinois Benedictine College, in Lisle, and Kennedy-King College, in Chicago.

He said the suspect, 5-foot-9, 140 pounds, kept running at first, "shouting out he didn't do nothing," Bartlett said.

Bartlett hopped out of the truck and chased the suspect on foot. He finally nabbed the suspect, grabbing him by the arm as the suspect leaned, huffing and puffing, against a tree at Van Buren and Desplaines Streets.

"He was said. 'When him he ch didn't mean 'He didn't when he saw stop.'"

Later Sun John Morris Park Ave., assault.

The assault quire hospi calmed by fi

"Those guy they deserve not us cops," policeman.

Corrections and clarifications

• A story on upcoming primary election races in Cook County that ran in some editions of The Tribune Aug. 25 incorrectly listed Chester Majewski as one of the members of the Metropolitan Sanitary District board who face re-election next year. The post is held by his wife, Gloria Alitto Majewski, who succeeded her husband after he died in '83. The Tribune regrets the error.